

## Synopsis of PFA Demonstration Project Criteria

### Program Criteria:

1. **Offer Universal, Voluntary, and Free Preschool Programs**
2. **Coordinate Accessible and High Quality Facilities through expansion and upgrades** so all 4 year olds in the designated district(s), city, or county have access to preschool
3. **Plan to Start in Underserved and High Priority Communities**
4. **Serve Diverse Populations**, including children with disabilities/special needs and children who are English language learners
5. **Develop Preschool Programs that meet First 5 PFA standards:**
  - a. **Provide periodic health/developmental screenings**, assessments, follow up
  - b. **Provide Preschool equivalent to 3 Hours/Day for the School Year in a variety of Public and Private Settings that meet quality standards**
  - c. **Use Content, Performance, and Program Standards** aligned with CDE "Desired Results System for Children and Families" including:
    - Preschool content and performance standards and curriculum that are articulated with California's Kindergarten through third grade standards.
    - Staff to child and teacher to child ratios meet, or improve upon, State Preschool requirements (3:24) or a research-based alternative (e.g., 2:20).
    - Groups need to be of sufficient size to prepare children for experiences in Kindergarten classrooms.
    - Nutritious meals and snacks.
  - d. **Provide Transition Support** for children entering the preschool programs and for preschoolers entering Kindergarten.

### Teaching Staff Criteria:

6. **Commit to a Qualified, Diverse Workforce with a 5-10 Year Timeframe to Reach Quality Standards.** Preschool teachers and staff will be qualified and compensated using, as a minimum, State Preschool Program standards and rates in the area, and moving to parity with K/Elementary teacher salaries when qualifications are met. Within 5 years:
  - Master teachers - Bachelor's degree with 24 ECE credits, with the goal of all preschool master teachers having a Bachelor's degree and an Early Education Credential (proposed new credential) or Multiple Subject Elementary School Credential within 10 years.
  - Assistant teachers - Associate's degree with appropriate ECE credits.
  - Staff will participate in professional development to educate children with varied languages and cultures, and children with disabilities and other special needs
7. **Implement Strategies to Recruit, Support, and Train a Diverse and Qualified Workforce with local colleges and universities**

### Policy and Fiscal Criteria:

8. **Show Evidence of Policy Commitments** by First 5 County Commission and partners, including the Equity Principles and connecting with other First 5 Programs
9. **Commit to Participate in First 5 CCFC Process and Outcome Evaluation**
10. **Develop a Diverse Preschool Provider System**
11. **Show Evidence of Fiscal Commitments and Provide 5-Year Budgets** that identify: a) the funds and funding source(s), b) the number of new and of improved preschool spaces for each community. Based on these numbers, First 5 CCFC funds will: 1) contribute to funding preschool spaces when PFA quality standards are met; and 2) contribute to spaces that meet entry-level standards by funding incremental levels of quality improvements that advance towards PFA quality standards.

### Family Partnership Criteria:

12. **Implement Family Outreach and Involvement**
13. **Connect with Wrap Around Child Care and other Family Supports as needed**

### **Definition of Preschool For All (PFA)**

Preschool for All (PFA) is a free, voluntary, part-day preschool program for all four year olds (or three- and four-year olds) that is integrated into California's public education system. The PFA program will assist children in becoming personally, socially, and physically competent, effective learners, and ready to transition into kindergarten. To prepare children for school readiness, the First 5 CCFC is working with the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop PFA content, performance and program standards that will be articulated with kindergarten through third grade standards. The long-term goal is to implement California's Master Plan for Education PFA Recommendations (2002):

- Preschool, including current early care and education programs that will meet quality standards, will be an integrated part of California's system of public education.
- Preschool teacher education and compensation will increase to parity with Kindergarten/ Early Elementary teachers.
- Preschool will be administered by the California Department of Education (CDE) and connected with K-12 education. CDE will develop standards and centralized training, monitoring, and oversight while facilitating preschool systems that build on local capacity and meet local needs.

The foundation for PFA was established by the First 5 School Readiness Initiative, by California's Master Plan for Education (2002), and by the Universal Preschool Task Force Report (1998).

## **Expanded PFA Demonstration Project Criteria (Arranged by 13 Criteria)**

### **Program Criteria:**

#### **1. Offer Universal, Voluntary, and Free Preschool Programs**

Preschool will be free to all and voluntary. Preschool will be offered for at least one-half day during the regular school year. The PFA Demonstration Projects will receive funding based on the State Preschool time base of a 3 hours per day program operating for a 175-day school year (or an equivalent plan that provides 525 hours over a full year, e.g., 2 ½ hours per day for 210 days). Preschool will build on programs provided through a variety of public and private settings that meet quality standards.

Establish a 5-7-year roll-out timeframe for providing preschool services that meet quality standards and criteria for all 4yos in the identified school district(s) with at least 1000 4 year olds, or as close to 1000 4yos as possible in a citywide or countywide system, and plan for long-term sustainability. Agree to, and explain roll-out process and timeframe, for PFA Demonstration Projects 'Expanded Criteria for First 5 PFA Programs', including connection with the SR Programs, SN Projects, CARES programs, and others as available and appropriate.

#### **2. Coordinate Accessible and High Quality Facilities through expansion and upgrades so all 4 year olds in the designated district(s), city, or county have access to preschool**

Preschools will be provided in appropriate facilities that are clean, safe, accessible, inclusive, licensed, meet regulatory quality standards, and are well-equipped with sufficient, appropriate materials and toys. The facilities are licensed (Title 22) and meet regulatory quality standards for the State Preschool Program (Title 5). Programs will use accepted external review instruments such as, Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- ECERS or Family Day Care Rating Scale – FDCRS (acceptable scores of '5' or better). Facilities and playgrounds shall meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the California Building Standards Code, and address best practices for accessible facilities.

Assess, analyze, and develop plans that maximize unused capacity within current public and private preschool programs/facilities district or citywide or countywide; and coordinate planning for the development, upgrading, and expansion of preschool facilities, using bond measures, the ABCD/Packard Partnership, LEA and Head Start and other ECE funding for facilities, local funds, and other opportunities.

### 3. Plan to Start in Underserved and High Priority Communities

Include a mix of achievement levels in participating district(s), city, or county. Begin implementation by focusing on developing PFA in underserved and high-priority communities, including schools with a current Academic Performance Index score in deciles 1-5.

Achieve a 'systems' level for testing a variety of PFA configurations by selecting districts to participate that include a mix of achievement levels (including current high-priority schools with API 1-5) and use a school district-level approach for implementation (e.g., a medium sized district or consortium of several small districts), or a city or county-level approach. Begin implementation by focusing on developing PFA in underserved and high-priority communities as part of 'system' of PFA Project (beginning with implementation in high-priority schools API 1-5). Additionally commit to giving priority to low-income communities with a very low supply of preschools (i.e., limited capacity). As PFA is school-based or school-linked, strong evidence of commitment and partnership with local education agencies is necessary. This partnership structure will further the ultimate goal of public education funding, including parity in teachers' salaries.

### 4. Serve Diverse Populations, including children with disabilities/special needs and children who are English language learners

Preschools will appropriately serve children with diverse languages and cultures, as well as provide affirmative inclusion for children with disabilities and other special needs. Provide periodic developmental assessments and screenings, including appropriate identification, treatment (intervention), and supportive services.

Using the First 5 Special Needs Project's definition, all children with disabilities or other special needs will be served. This definition states:

*The target population is children birth to five years of age who live in communities served by the School Readiness Initiative and who are: 1. Protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); or 2. Have or are at risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who require developmental, health, mental health, and related services and/or supports of a type or amount beyond that usually required." (Special Needs Project RFA, Section I.C. page 4)*

Evidence of how programs serve this population includes:

- Each PFA Demonstration Project will use available local data to estimate a targeted number (or percentage) of children with disabilities and other special needs to be served. The number of children served who have a disability or other special need should be consistent with, and advance, current federal regulations, such as Head Start. This target number will be part of the PFA Plans being developed and will be a criterion for PFA Demonstration Project funding.
- Evidence in agreements with Local Education Agency (LEA = County Office of Education or School District), Regional Center (RC), and County Commission that cover implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act including search and serve, referral process, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Program Plan (IPP) process and provision of special education and related services when appropriate.
- Evaluation, including self-assessment and data collection, by PFA Demonstration Projects working with partners including the LEA or the RC. Data to be collected may include the IEP (LEA) or IPP (RC) information systems to ensure programs are meeting requirements and providing effective early intervention.
- Training for providers to ensure full inclusion/neverstreaming.
- All facilities are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- Coordination and expansion of services with partners (e.g., Head Start).

- Use products to be developed by the SN Projects such as:
  - Definition of disability categories
  - Evidence-based screening tools and protocol
  - Assessment and referral protocol
  - Effective family outreach
  - Teacher/staff training.

#### 5. Develop Preschool Programs that meet First 5 PFA standards:

- a. **Provide periodic health/developmental screenings**, assessments, follow up
- b. **Provide Preschool equivalent to 3 Hours/Day for the School Year in a variety of Public and Private Settings that meet quality standards**
- c. **Use Content, Performance, and Program Standards** aligned with CDE “Desired Results System for Children and Families” including:
  - Preschool content and performance standards and curriculum that are articulated with California’s Kindergarten through third grade standards.
  - Staff to child and teacher to child ratios meet, or improve upon, State Preschool requirements (3:24) or a research-based alternative (e.g., 2:20).
  - Groups need to be of sufficient size to prepare children for experiences in Kindergarten classrooms.
  - Nutritious meals and snacks.
  - **Provide Transition Support** for children entering the preschool programs and for preschoolers entering Kindergarten.

Preschool will reflect research-based, high quality standards. Implementation of First 5 PFA Demonstration Projects will be based on the existing State Preschool Program, with appropriate modifications and incremental improvements, supported by the California Department of Education (CDE)/Child Development Division (CDD) “Desired Results System for Children and Families.” The Desired Results System includes establishing content, performance and program standards; completion of the child’s developmental profile and family survey; and on-site program review processes. The quality characteristics for the PFA Demonstration Projects will include the following criteria:

- There are positive relationships between teachers and children, and teachers use strategies to bolster emotional wellness. Communication occurs throughout the day with mutual listening, talking-responding, and encouragement to use reasoning and problem-solving.
- The CDE/CDD ‘PreKindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines’ and preschool content and performance standards (to be developed in 2005) are aligned and articulated with California’s Kindergarten through third grade standards.
- The CDE/CDD ‘PreKindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines’ and preschool content and performance standards are used in the design of curriculum and learning activities. Opportunities are provided daily for early literacy, visual and performing arts, science, math, physical activity, health/nutrition, social skills/relationship building, and group activities.
- Provide developmentally and experientially appropriate activities that develop and support children’s social-emotional, linguistic, cognitive, and physical (gross and fine motor) skills. This includes:
  - Accommodating the many individual learning styles and abilities of children by providing appropriate content that offers interesting and meaningful choices and experiences.
  - Involving children regularly in initiating, planning, and implementing activities and then reflect on what they have learned.
  - Creating a developmentally appropriate classroom-like setting for children in large enough peer group size that prepares them socially and educationally for kindergarten. Groups need to be of sufficient size to promote socialization skills and prepare children for experiences in Kindergarten classrooms.
  - Establishing appropriate blocks of time throughout the day that allow teacher-group (large and small) instruction, individual child-teacher interaction, child-initiated experiences, leisurely exploration of activities, and alternating periods of active and quiet activities.
- Nutritious meals and snack are provided daily using USDA Childcare Food Program standards and reimbursement (whenever possible).

- There are materials and activities to promote understanding and acceptance of diversity by children, families, and staff. The First 5 CCFC 'Equity Principles' are implemented and assessed.
- Staff to child and teacher to child ratios do not exceed State Preschool requirements (3:24) or a research-based alternative (e.g., 2:20 with a master teacher who has a bachelor's degree in an ECE-related field and credential, a teacher with an associate degree, and additional staff and volunteers including parents to lower the adult to child ratios). Group sizes implement the 'school readiness' recommendations of the CA's Master Plan for Education (2002) and the Universal Preschool Task Force Report (1998).

Preschools will provide for transitions for children entering the preschool programs and for preschoolers entering Kindergarten. Preschools will be part of an integrated infrastructure (workforce, facilities, etc.) spanning birth through school-age programs, which is part of California's free public education system in order to implement the PFA recommendations of California's Master Plan for Education.

### **Teaching Staff Criteria:**

#### **6. Commit to a Qualified, Diverse Workforce with a 5-10 Year Timeframe to Reach Quality Standards. Preschool teachers and staff will be qualified and compensated using, as a minimum, State Preschool Program standards and rates in the area, and moving to parity with K/Elementary teacher salaries when qualifications are met. Within 5 years:**

- Master teachers - Bachelor's degree with 24 ECE credits, with the goal of all preschool master teachers having a Bachelor's degree and an Early Education Credential (proposed new credential) or Multiple Subject Elementary School Credential within 10 years.
- Assistant teachers - Associate's degree with appropriate ECE credits.
- Staff will participate in professional development to educate children with varied languages and cultures, and children with disabilities and other special needs

Teachers and staff are qualified and compensated accordingly. State Preschool Program Title 5 standards and rates in the area are used as a minimum, and rates move to parity with K/Elementary teachers when qualifications are achieved (i.e., salary/benefits schedule). There is a plan for all preschool lead/master teachers to have a Bachelor's degree with 24 credits in early childhood education/child development using criteria listed in the Universal Preschool Task Force Report (1998) within 5 years, with the goal of all preschool master teachers having a Bachelor's degree and an Early Education credential (new) or Multiple Subject elementary school credential within 10 years. There is a plan for assistant teachers to have an Associate's degree with appropriate credits in early childhood education/child development within 5 years. All staff are supervised and evaluated, and have opportunities for professional development as demonstrated by documented progress on the Child Development Permit Matrix as required by the State Preschool Program. There are focused recruitment and education supports (including tutoring, linked ESL and ECE classes, tuition and book reimbursements, etc.) to sustain and enhance the diversity of ECE teachers, staff, and administrators.

Counties that participate in PFA Planning and Demonstration Projects need to coordinate the efforts of PFA and CARES. The Degree Track in CARES is required for PFA Planning and Demonstration counties that choose to participate in CARES. This Track is separate from the Permit Track to emphasize that to achieve quality care, classroom teachers also need degrees. PFA Planning counties with a separate system, besides or in addition to CARES, for raising the educational standards of PFA participants must demonstrate how the programs will link and collaborate.

#### **7. Implement Strategies to Recruit, Support, and Train a Diverse and Qualified Workforce with local colleges and universities**

Expand planning and implementation of workforce development strategies to: a) increase the number of qualified early childhood educators, as stated in the 'Expanded Criteria for PFA Programs, b) provide outreach/retention of a diverse workforce that reflects the language and cultural diversity of California's children, and c) enhances training for full inclusion of children with disabilities and other special needs.

Teacher training for preschool will be integrated with the college and university systems for high quality teacher training and include community-based training venues. Workforce development strategies are coordinated with CARES programs and related efforts.

### **Policy and Fiscal Criteria:**

#### **8. Show Evidence of Policy Commitments by First 5 County Commission and partners, including the Equity Principles and connecting with other First 5 Programs**

Formally approved by the First 5 County Commission with:

- a. Evidence of significant policy commitments by First 5 County Commission and/or LEA (County Office of Education or School District School Board and/or Superintendent) and/or Elected Governance Body (County Board of Supervisors, City Council/Mayor) through letter of commitment or MOU, resolution/actions, Ballot measures, Strategic Plan - County Commission and others.
- b. Agreement to implement PFA models that build a statewide system of PFA in accord with California's Master Plan for Education.

Commit to full implementation of the First 5 Equity Principles.

Demonstrate integration with all related First 5 projects and Initiatives, such as the School Readiness Initiative, CARES, Special Needs Projects, Health Access Projects, and any others.

#### **9. Commit to Participate in First 5 CCFC Process and Outcome Evaluation**

Commitment to participate in First 5 PFA statewide process and outcome evaluation. Preschools will fully participate in First 5 statewide evaluation processes in order to demonstrate benefits to young children that are measurable across the 5 domains (National Education Goals Panel) of children's learning and development through the early elementary grades. Results will include: high quality preschool services available to all 4 year olds (or 3 and 4 year olds); demonstrated progress for participating 4 year olds (or 3 and 4 year olds); improved school readiness success indicators (Kindergarten measures); and school success continuing through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Initial priority for enrollment of children in a PFA program shall be given to children four years of age. During phase-in of the program, children three years of age may participate to meet an enrollment target or fill a PFA classroom.

#### **10. Develop a Diverse Preschool Provider System**

For Family Child Care Homes (FCCHs), participation will be based on large FCCHs where the majority of children are preschool age, in small FCCHs that are part of a network, or in another experimental model approved on a case-by-case basis. In all FCCHs there is a qualified teacher (same qualifications required for PFA staff in a center- or school-based program) available exclusively to the preschool children during the core preschool program. The group of preschool children served needs to be of sufficient size to prepare children socially and educationally for a classroom experience in kindergarten.

Provide preschool services through formal agreements between local education agencies and a variety of public and private providers that meet required quality standards and include strong evidence of commitment and partnership with local education agencies. Demonstrate integration with available preschool programs and related services and local partnerships for PFA

Fund preschool services through First 5 County Commission contracts with local education agencies that function as the fiscal agent (e.g., funds flow from County Commissions to local education agencies via contracts; or funds flow from the County Commission to the county office of education to a countywide agency); or fund preschool services through County Commission contracts with a city, county, or nonprofit organization in partnership with, and with the approval of, a local education agency or agencies (The public agency or local education agency partners acts as the fiscal agent - public agency means a county board of supervisors or city council when the city is incorporated or has a charter.); or other option to be determined

when there is demonstrated commitment to change as necessary to become part of California's public education system.

**11. Show Evidence of Fiscal Commitments and Provide 5-Year Budgets that identify: a) the funds and funding source(s), b) the number of new and of improved preschool spaces for each community. Based on these numbers, First 5 CCFC funds will: 1) contribute to funding preschool spaces when PFA quality standards are met; and 2) contribute to spaces that meet entry-level standards by funding incremental levels of quality improvements that advance towards PFA quality standards.**

Evidence of significant current and future financial commitments from First 5 County commission and other partner(s) (e.g., Commission Budgets, Partner Budgets, PFA Budget with Multiple Sources, projected/actual revenues from taxes, fees, bonds, etc.) to develop and sustain the PFA Demonstration Project.

Provide annual budgets for at least 5 years that identify: a) the funds and funding source(s), b) the number of new preschool spaces and the number of enhanced preschool spaces for each community in the PFA Demonstration Projects. First 5 CCFC funds will: 1) contribute to funding preschool spaces when PFA quality standards are met; and 2) contribute to spaces that meet entry-level standards by funding incremental levels of quality improvements that advance towards PFA quality standards (e.g., salary/benefit schedule).

Plan to serve at least 1000 4 year olds by identifying the school district(s), or identify the number to be served in a citywide or countywide PFA Demonstration Project. The goal is to expand preschool spaces (approximately 10,000 spaces/year) and improve preschool quality (approximately 20,000 spaces/year) using First 5 CCFC contributions of \$12M/year for new preschool spaces and \$7M/year for improved quality. The First 5 CCFC will support local quality improvements from an agreed-upon 'menu' of quality enhancements such as higher teacher salaries when qualifications are achieved.

Preschool rates will increase incrementally based on improvements in teacher education (and compensation) to reach parity with Kindergarten revenue limits and teacher compensation levels (average revenue limit or annual amount paid per student). The County Commission plan needs to demonstrate local capacity to approach the stretch goal of increasing both the number and quality of preschool spaces. The First 5 CA level of support provides an average of \$350/child/year to improve the quality of currently licensed spaces, and \$1200/child/year to add new high quality preschool spaces. This level of First 5 CCFC support is intended to encourage local efforts to build and sustain preschool services after the one-time investment of First 5 CCFC funds.

## **Family Partnership Criteria:**

### **12. Implement Family Outreach and Involvement**

Preschools will invite and support parent and family partnership and involvement in all aspects of the program, including leadership in program design, implementation, and evaluation. Parent advisory groups will include parents/families with preschool-aged children who represent the languages/cultures of the children and children with disabilities and other special needs.

### **13. Connect with Wrap Around Child Care and other Family Supports as needed**

Preschool will be a viable option for all families by providing connections to full day, full year child care services when needed. The wrap-around child care services will be integrated with current high quality child care providers with minimal transitions for children and families. A variety of public and private funding mechanisms, including fees, will be used to support wrap-around child care. Options could include: ½ day preschool program with public/First 5 funding in a full-day preschool; a ½ day preschool with public/First 5 funding with wrap around childcare that has a sliding fee scale for parents and/or subsidized childcare; ½ day preschool program with public/First 5 funding with licensed childcare at the same program/site or in neighborhood locations such as family childcare homes and child care centers; ½ day preschool with public/First 5 funding with 'wrap around' parental or informal care; and other options that meet the stated criteria.

When an intermediary is used for the program and for fiscal operations of the FA Demonstration Project, the following criteria need to be met

**Expanded Criteria for an Effective PFA Intermediary for First 5 County Commissions:**

1. A track record of working on issues with the 0-5 population.
2. Experience in funding community-wide or district-wide educational initiatives and preK programs.
3. Consistent, accountable and formalized audits using General Accounting Principles.
4. A clear, state aligned, maximum overhead/administrative infrastructure (10% or CDE approved level whichever is less).
5. An organizational culture that demonstrates flexibility and competency in working with multiple education and community partners.
6. Demonstrated experience and willingness in maintaining and leveraging state, federal and private resources to maximize financial investment in the 0-5 population.
7. Demonstrated experience in providing direct developmentally appropriate services to the 3-5 year old population.
8. Openness and willingness to change current system delivery structure. (As an expectation for participation, information on the current system and what is working/not working, what changes would be necessary, your vision, and the partners you bring.)
9. Experience in serving as lead actuary and /or fiscal account with multiple community partners with formalized assessments between all partners.
10. Demonstrated history and formalized practice (i.e., diversity of staff at all levels) of working with children and families from diverse backgrounds and special needs.
11. Experience in maintaining and evaluating contractors (i.e., monitoring, evaluation, financial evaluation, child and system monitoring).
12. Demonstrated practice of including parents and others carefully in all aspects of program design, implementation and evaluation.
13. Formal board action to participate (Local Education Agencies need to include the Superintendent's participation) and recognition of all the standards and criteria.

**Highly Desirable:**

- Experience partnering with a First 5 Commission
- Experience in effective outreach models that work with informal/kin providers, family home care and center-based providers
- Experience in supporting and implementing professional development for child care providers and increasing salary and education levels to that of kindergarten/elementary teachers
- Experience in articulation between preschool environments (i.e. informal care, family home care, centers, etc.) and kindergarten programs county wide
- Experience in aligning preK activities with the K-3 curriculum
- Staff dedicated to this project (not supplanted) with background and education in child development and early elementary education